

(TO RESCHEDULE MEETING OF FEB. 11, 2013)

CRANSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

BUDGET ADOPTION

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2013

WESTERN HILLS MIDDLE SCHOOL

400 PHENIX AVENUE

EXECUTIVE SESSION: 6:00 P.M.

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED BY PUBLIC MEETING

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED BY PUBLIC BUDGET WORK SESSION

MINUTES

The Budget Adoption meeting of the Cranston School Committee was held on the evening of the above date at Western Hills Middle School with the following members present: Ms. Iannazzi, Mr. Traficante, Mrs. Ruggieri, Mr. Trent, Mr. Gale, and Mrs. Culhane. Mrs. McFarland was absent with cause.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. It was moved by Mrs. Ruggieri and seconded by Mr. Gale and unanimously carried that the members adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to RI State Laws –

PL 42-46-5(a)(1) Personnel:

- a. (Discussion of Termination of Non-Certified Employee “A”)**
- b. (Discussion of a Memorandum of Agreement between Cranston School**

Committee and Teacher “A”)

PL 42-46-5(a)(2) Collective Bargaining and Litigation:

- a. (Contract Negotiations’ Update – Secretaries)**
- b. (Teachers)**

Call to Order – Public Session was called to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was conducted and the roll was called. A quorum was present.

Ms. Iannazzi reported out that no votes were taken in Executive Session.

Executive Session Minutes Sealed – February 14, 2013 – A motion to seal the minutes of Executive Session was made by Mr. Gale and seconded by Mrs. Culhane. The roll was called; all were in favor.

Minutes of Previous Meetings Approved – January 7 & 10, 2013 – A motion was made to approve the above minutes from January 7th and 10th, 2013 by Mr. Trent and seconded by Mrs. Culhane. The roll was called. All were in favor.

Public Acknowledgements / Communications – There are none.

Chairperson’s Communications – Ms. Iannazzi, at this time, asked Attorney Cascione to provide to the public with his legal advice that he has provided the School Committee with regards to the Open

Meetings Act.

Attorney Cascione – My understanding; this question is with regard to the Public Hearing that you have on “Non-Agenda Items”. The Open Meetings Law with regard to that type of thing states: That you are not required to even have such an Agenda Item. It also states that you are under no obligation to, if you do have it, to respond to any questions from the public; however, you can if it is for informational purposes only. My advice to the School Committee is that you should not be responding because if you cross the line for informational into business of the School Committee, you’re going to be liable for an Open Meetings violation. The purpose of the Open Meetings Law is that everything that you do, as far as the business of the School Committee, is supposed to be open in public and with notice to the public so if it’s a non-agenda item, the rest of the public doesn’t have notice of and somebody brings up something that you respond to and suddenly it becomes a discussion. You can be deemed to be doing business without the proper notice which would be a violation. My advice is that you can listen but you should not be responding or engaging in conversation on that.

Ms. Iannazzi – Just to take that one step further, if any member of the public at any time has any question for any member of the School Committee, our contact information; both phone number and e-mail; is listed not only on the Cranston Public Schools website but also on the Secretary of State website and the City of Cranston’s website.

Superintendent's Communications

Superintendent Lundsten – Good evening. Today when the Cranston Herald was published, the Kindergarten Registration Schedule was also published; however, the Herald published the wrong information.

They published last years' schedule not this years' schedule. If you would all please take note that they are going to re-publish the correct dates that had been submitted to them in next week's Herald. We also have it up on the Cranston Public Schools website and I'm going to be asking the principals to notify everybody in their e-mail blast so that they don't have any parents with the incorrect dates. Thank you.

School Committee Member Communications

Mrs. Culhane – Thank you. I was reading the Cranston Herald Editorial section this week and I noticed on Feb. 6th there was an editorial by a gentleman who actually did run for school committee in this last election and I want to correct him on something he said because I think it's very important that the public understands this. Superintendent Lundsten was not promoted into her position. We posted the position; we interviewed for the position; we looked at several candidates over public hearings that many of you attended and that were hours long. We did our own interviews; we had the public submit questions and have an input into who is selected as Superintendent. So for somebody who attempted to run for School

Committee to say that we promoted someone to the position of Superintendent, is really an awful misrepresentation; actually quite a misunderstanding of what happened. Superintendent Lundsten was hired for the position through the process of being hired. The same we do for every other position in the City and I think it's important for people to understand that and know that and should stand corrected on that. Thank you.

Public Hearing

- a. Students (Agenda/Non-Agenda Matters) – There were none.**
- b. Members of the Public (Agenda Matters Only) –**

Lizbeth Larkin, teacher at Park View Middle School and President of the Cranston Teachers' Alliance:

As you well know I am very troubled by the proposed budget cuts that are once again going to tremendously impact the educational structure at the Middle School level. Many of the School Committee members were present when the World Language structure was changed to meet 4 X's a week as a core subject. We are diminishing that program by using that time as a pull out when needed for other at-risk students. You were also present for the economic reasons that the district moved the 6th grade back to the elementary level. This move removed a crucial transition year for students to grow emotionally, academically and also in their organization and study skills. As the Union President, but first and foremost an educator, I have taught grades 3-8 for over 30 years. Superintendent Lundsten

stated in her Budget Presentation that we needed to address the needs and the concerns of the school district that is rapidly changing in demographics. We have a 41% poverty rate; a fast growing ELL (English Language Learner) population; demands of a growing need for highly involved Special Education Programs and Services. More than ever we now must address these needs and support the educators, the related service providers and the teacher assistants that are teaching and guiding our students. We should not be cutting staff and overloading classes, only to put in a Math support system for students at risk! One action negates the other!

We also have a problem in this nation and especially in this State with the RIDE leadership who under the guise of “Education Reform” have turned our students into a test score. It is the constant “Quest for the Test”. The assessments keep changing, the data analysis changes, they are insisting that our students are going to be assessed into excess! Interventions can be accomplished in many ways rather than having an already struggling and fidgety middle school student have 100 minutes a day of Math instruction. We need to provide support for small ad hoc groups to be pulled out of class or supported in our classrooms. We need after school programs, summer enrichment and/or support programs.

We constantly hear from the media about students failing Math, think about it. This is not the Math that we all know. Students who do it in their head or find alternate pathways to the answer, fail these tests

because not only do the students have to calculate the problem, they have to provide a written detailed explanation of how they got the answer. What if a student is not strong in written language or learning the English language or has a learning disability or attention issues and struggles to meet the criteria. They struggle to meet the criteria with all this while truly understanding the Math and it is discrimination.

NECAP Tests do not accept alternate pathways and will be replaced with the PARCC Test. A totally different assessment. It never ends. In a perfect world we should have an intervention in Pre-K. We need an All-Day Kindergarten. The new Common Core Standards start in Pre-K and All-Day K. We need a return of Literacy aides in K-2 and an addition of numeracy aides in K-2. We need more support for our English Language Learners in our elementary classrooms.

The 6th grade should be moved back to the middle school and making way in the schools for all of the All-Day K. We need to invest in our future; we need to nurture and teach the whole child and not to a test number. Our students are successful and many years after leaving Cranston Public Schools students don't talk about, "hey I got a 1 or a 2 in the Math NECAP test. They talk about the plays, the performances, the concerts, the special projects, a favorite teacher, the day that made a difference, a good friend, a prom, a winning game. All of this is slowly disappearing. You cannot put a number or a value on this. We need to address all of our children and also vital

**employees should not be cut or sacrificed to fund these needs.
Thank you.**

**Audrey Guttin, Presently teaches at Cranston High School West:
Serves as Program Supervisor for Family and Consumer Science.**

Let's look at some numbers. The number 2 – Obesity is the number 2 cause of preventable death in the United States. The number 9 million is the number of children between the ages of 6 and 19 that are overweight. The number 60 million is the number of people 20 years or older who are obese, a condition that increases the risk of health conditions and diseases including breast cancer, coronary heart disease, type II diabetes, gallbladder disease, osteoarthritis, colon cancer, hypertension and stroke. And there are more numbers.

Our lives revolve around numbers. There are SAT scores, ACT scores and NECAP scores. There are numbers that destine our lives and numbers that control our lives. You need a certain SAT score to get into the college of your choice and a certain NECAP score to now graduate from high school. However, your cholesterol, blood pressure, osteoporosis and diabetes test scores are the numbers that control your life. You see my department is into the numbers game too! We teach real numbers. Your cholesterol, HDL, LDL, blood pressure and weight are the numbers that affect your future health. These are the numbers that determine the quality of your life. Your healthy future is at stake if your numbers aren't correctly interpreted

in our curriculum.

So whether you are interpreting the number facts on a nutrition label, studying consumer or personal finance, designing and creating fashion to be worn on the body where there is a constant movement between 2D and 3D viewing geometric structures in the composition of buildings and furniture, math is at the very heart of our curriculum!

Family and Consumer Sciences education classes integrate core academics (Science, math social studies and language arts) and reinforces the content with critical thinking skills and “real world application”. The NECAP questions demonstrate these principles.

Let’s concentrate on the number one for a minute. The number one prime objective for educators today is to align their instruction to common core standards and to use resources that connect English Language Arts concepts and skills in the classroom to the outside world. This adds relevance to what is being taught. This is precisely what Family and Consumer Sciences does. As Confucius taught us, “What I hear I forget; what I see I remember; what I do I understand.”

I have only skimmed the surface of what Family and Consumer Sciences education does and can do for the students in our City. I encourage you to continue to support this program as part of the educational program in Cranston. Thank you for this opportunity to speak with you about a very important and vital program area in the Cranston Public School System. I urge you to reconsider the layoff of

a veteran teacher in the Family and Consumer Sciences Department.
Thank you.

Maahaela Horta: Teaches at Western Hills Middle School

I have major concerns about the proposed Middle School cuts. Middle School students depend on social and academic guidance. Teacher to student ratio is key for the success of teaching and learning alike. It's not a new concept that the more individualized learning is, the better the results. Cutting teams, increasing class size and reducing course options only result in a financial gain for the new Math initiative. With this financial gain as the priority, our students will be the ones to suffer. Less one-on-one time; less individualized attention; less elective course options; less, less, less. Less is neglecting what is best for our students. Enduring what benefits our students is wrong. Running our schools in a businesslike manner with money as a primary focus only results in core customer service and decreased capital gain. These cuts that continue to occur will only lead to parents choosing not to send their student to Cranston Public Schools. Students do not care that Cranston saved "X" amount of money when they are lost in a Math class with 28 students. Parents do not care that Cranston saved "X" amount of dollars when their children are not getting the personalized education that they deserve. When students are shoved in extra ramped up math classes they miss the creative options that should be available to them. When this happens, our students simply do not enjoy coming to school. I remember when students here at Western

Hills a couple of weeks ago were told that they were being pulled out of their UA's to be part of a IXL extra Math ramp up program. They came back to class discouraged, disappointed and even angry. Ask yourselves what positive gains come from these cuts and remind yourselves that the cliental of our business is impressionable children. Thank you.

Joanne Spaziano: Teaches at Park View Middle School

Good evening. I'm a Cranston resident, a parent of a Cranston School graduate and a teacher at Park View Middle School. I would like to talk about the proposed cuts to Middle School and I would like to talk about the Math as well as cutting teams. I want you to recall that I was here in the past when 6th grade was being sent back to the elementary schools and I stood against that at that time because my belief was that it was purely for financial gain. We have students that come to us now in the 7th grade who have had to leave some of the elementary schools that they went to for five years to go to another elementary school for one year where their education is disrupted and then come to a new school for 7th grade. I can't tell you how disruptive that is for several of our students on our team just this year. It's not the first year it's happened. Had that been a situation where they had just come to Park View, they would have had three continuous years. That's just one example.

Cutting teams; ok, I get that; population's down; I understand that

mathematically. There's not much we can do about that but have we looked at boundaries all across the City; do we need to move boundary lines again? Being a Math teacher myself, I try to bring a lot of fun into my classes and as Mrs. Horta just said, she had students that were angry and upset when they got put into an extra Math class. I do twice a week Math ramp up on my team with students who scored a 1 or a 2 in Math. My kids work on fun and engaging Math activities. They do not do repetitive work so that they're ready for common core testing. There has to be a different way to approach this so students don't say, "Oh my god, I've got more Math". How many people would ever stand up in a crowded room and say, "Hey I can't read". But people will readily stand up in public and say that they don't get math and that they don't know how to do Math all day. It's such a shame. The fact is that it's perpetuated everywhere we go. Even in the school system. We need to make sure that our kids can do Math and that they like doing it. What this really gets back to is Commissioner Gist who's demanded that Math data gets driven right back to the Department of Education and that's what drives our curriculum. She wants the data that backs her PHD and that's what's driving us because she rolls the whip. If we don't get the data back to her on the Math or on the English; that's what it comes down to so we kind of got our hands tied. Is this what we've become? Thank you.

Ms. Iannazzi noted that the recording secretary has requested that anyone speaking tonight, please hand in their speeches if they have

one.

Suzanne Arena, 88 Lakeland Rd.

Just listening to everybody talk about Math and some of the issues which are pretty obvious to everyone; the other issue that we haven't talked about is English and in Grades 1 – 3 you learn to read. If you have a child that is a special education child; a lot of kids have learning disorders when it comes to reading. If you can't read from grades 1-3 and by the 4th grade you pick it up, when you're now reading to learn, there's a huge issue and a lot of your special education teachers have come to me and said, "We need to do early intervention". If we do it early, we spend less in the long run. I'm happy to put something together and maybe budgetary we could cut some costs. I find that we spend way too much money on reading specialists who work with children for years and not even see that a child has dyslexia. Twenty percent of the kids have it and we don't recognize it in Rhode Island. We are trying to work it out with legislation; but I think that this is something that really needs to be looked at as well. It's great to know how to do Math but a lot of kids who have the same issues with reading also have processing issues with Math and everything else.

Nathan Goodrich: Social Studies teacher at Hugh B. Bain Middle School:

Wanted to also weigh in on the proposed budget that would apply cuts to the middle school level. I too, like many of the people here,

was at many of the meetings five years ago when the 6th grade was moved away from the middle school down to our elementary schools.

I saw many people, i.e., teachers, students, parents, stand up and say that they disagreed with this move. But at the time, I understood; I'm a Social Studies teacher and I get economics very well. I understand that sometimes, especially in economic times like this, we need to make cuts that benefit the tax payers like myself in lieu of what may be best for our children and best for our schools and I think that's what was done. The latest round of cuts is something that I cannot stand behind as an educator or a tax payer. What I see is a budget that is larger; that is going to cost myself and many people in this room more money for less teachers; for less people in the classroom; for more students in the classroom and I don't want to mislead anyone. I'm one of the teachers being cut. I'm an 11 year veteran of the Cranston Public Schools and for the fifth time in six years I'm facing not having a job next year. It's not a good feeling. As a tax payer it is incredibly frustrating to see the students that I teach; the kids in my neighborhood have to go to a school where there's going to be less teachers, bigger classes, less programs. When I got hired there was Middle School Sports. We had a Comprehensive Language Program; we had all of these great programs in the middle school, not to mention just the 6th graders had moved down. Bit by bit you're taking away from these kids. They're great kids; they deserve these programs. We had these programs when we grew up. Many of you here on the School Committee and many of the people sitting in this room went to Hugh

B. Bain Middle School. You went to Cranston Public Schools; you had these programs available to you; you didn't care about the cents and dollars; you loved the programs. I think the last thing I have to say is that this morning, I was reading in the Providence Journal about the group of students in Providence who were protesting the NECAP being tied to their Graduation Requirements. The thing that really struck me about it as maybe juvenile and misleading as youths tend to be, they weren't getting up there and saying that their school is terrible and their teachers are terrible or I wish I didn't go to school in Providence. They didn't say that. They like their schools; they enjoy their schools; they want to be at their schools. So do our kids; they want to go to school and enjoy themselves. I just want to give them that opportunity to have the programs that we all enjoyed as youth in Cranston or otherwise and not have to cut programs to increase tax payer contribution in order to have more students in the classroom. It just seems like the most educationally and fiscally irresponsible decision that I ever heard of in my ten years of teaching. Thank you.

Consent Calendar / Consent Agenda

Our proposed consent agenda is as follows:

Resolutions No.'s 13-02-03, 13-02-04 w/addendum, 13-02-5, 13-02-6,

and 13-02-9.

A motion was made by Mrs. Ruggieri, seconded by Mr. Colford and unanimously carried.

NO. 13-02-03 – RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following certified personnel be appointed as substitutes on a temporary basis as needed:

Ashley Ryan, Special Ed Elementary\Middle

Mary Chemel, Secondary English

Christine Grzebien, Special Ed Elementary\Middle

Jessica Dunn, Music K-12

Dawn Lancellotti, Elementary

NO. 13-02-04 - RESOLVED, Whereas, there may be more qualified teachers who will apply for current positions, and would be a better fit for the district, and

Whereas, certain positions became available after the teacher selection of July 18, 2012 and more senior and/or qualified teachers may elect to occupy these positions, and

Whereas, there is uncertainty of sufficient Federal, State and local funding for general and categorical programs for the 2013-2014 school year, program reductions, student and district needs,

consolidation of classes, re-alignment of staff and elimination of positions to more efficiently and effectively use the school system resources, and

Whereas, positions occupied by retirees must be posted each year, and

Whereas, positions must now be made available for more senior/qualified teachers who are scheduled to return from leave, and

Whereas, the teacher does not have the required certification, and there may be more qualified individuals who will apply for these positions, and

Whereas, because of these concerns, and in accordance with Title 16 of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island, the Superintendent has recommended that the employment of certain teachers be terminated at the end of the 2012-2013 school year, and

Whereas, the Superintendent has sent prior notice to said teachers informing them of the specific reasons for their termination, and

Be it RESOLVED that said teachers be terminated at the close of the school year under provisions of Title 16 of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island, and

Be it further RESOLVED that the Superintendent notify those teachers of the School Committee's action to terminate their employment.

ADDENDUM TO RESOLUTION NO. 13-02-04

Whereas, there are more qualified individuals available to better meet the needs of the district

NO. 13-02-05 – RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following non-certified personnel be appointed as substitutes on a temporary basis as needed:

Richard Tucci, Custodian

NO. 13-02-06 – RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the termination of the following non-certified employee “A” be accepted.

POLICY AND PROGRAM

NO. 13-02-09 -RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following Field Trip(s) of Long Duration/Conference(s) be authorized:

1. Christine Luther-Morris, teacher at Cranston High School West, and 15 students, to travel to Boston, MA to participate in the Twelfth Annual Boston Invitational Model United Nation Conference hosted

by the Boston University International Affairs Association from February 22 – 24, 2013, at no cost to the School Department. Please see the attached Field Trip of Long Duration form.

2. Audrey Romanelli, ESL at Horton, to travel to Washington, DC to attend the AFT ELL/SWD Training/Conference from February 27 – March 1, 2013, at no cost to the School Department; funded by AFT. Please see the attached Conference Form.

A motion was made by Mrs. Ruggieri, seconded by Mrs. Culhane and was unanimously carried on Resolution 13-02-01 (Mrs. Ruggieri presented this award). The roll was called and all were in favor.

SPONSORED BY THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

13-02-01 – WHEREAS, a regional juried art competition was sponsored by the Scholastic Art and Writing organization on January 12, 2013, and

WHEREAS, on January 14th, the Cranston secondary art teachers were notified that their students had been awarded Gold/Silver Keys in various Visual Arts categories, and

WHEREAS, the students who had been awarded Gold Keys will now be judged on the National Level.

Be it RESOLVED, that the Cranston School Committee wishes to

recognize and congratulate the following students for their wonderful achievement:

Cranston High School East:

Gabriel Bielawski, Gold Key - Art - Mixed Media - Self Portrait

Giulia Davis, Gold Key - Art – Drawing – Self Portrait

Giulia Davis, Gold Key - Art Portfolio – The Becoming

Julia Lawson, Silver Key - Art – Painting – Julia

Sandra Lopez-naz, Gold Key – Art - Drawing – Color Wheel Self Portrait

Sandra Lopez-naz, Silver Key – Art – Mixed Media – Turnip

Jamall Osterholm, Gold Key – Portfolio – Drawing – Snake Woman

Monica Phan, Silver Key – Art – Mixed Media – Self Portrait

Emma St. Jean, Silver Key – Art – Drawing – Iceland

Cranston High School West:

Amy Andrews, Gold Key – Art – Drawing – Anime Pride

Francesca Branca, Silver Key – Art – Jewelry – Bead Works

Serena Colizza, Silver Key – Art – Fashion – Elizabethan Armour

Nicholas Corry, Silver Key – Art – Drawing – Live Wire

Annette Deion, Silver Key – Art – Drawing – Meet My Evil Twin, Wrath

Jillian Kelshaw, Silver Key – Art – Drawing – My Grandfather

Alexandra Pizzuti, Gold Key – Portfolio – Drawing – On the Gurney

Alexandra Smith, Gold Key, America Visions Nominee–Art–Drawing – “Baegone”, My Grandma

Austen Tiburcio, Silver Key – Art – Sculpture – Fragile. Face Up.

Park View Middle School:

Joseph Healey, Silver Key – Art – Painting – Self-Portrait

Brenna Rojek, Gold Key – Art – Painting – Fruitilicious

Alexia White, Silver Key – Art – Mixed Media – One Keeps a Secret While Others Tell Lies

Hugh B. Bain Middle School:

Laney Kong, Silver Key – Art – Mixed Media – Purple Lady, After Picasso

Rosemary Savath, Silver Key – Art – Painting – Cubist Pears in Blue

Leah Struminsky, Silver Key – Art – Painting – Abstract Still-life with Ukulele

Western Hills Middle School:

Marina Mocerì, Gold Key – Art – Painting Mixed – Lipstick Trees

Keara Pedroso, Silver Key – Art – Mixed Media – “Kaleigh’s Flowers”

Cranston High School East:

Gabriel Bielawski, Senator Reed Best in Show – Art – Mixed Media – Self Portrait

Teachers:

Jill Cyr, Mary Ann Schultheis, Marty Russell, Valerie Bruzzi, Barbara Voccola, Claudia Venditto, Heidi Copeman, Alicia Hawkins, Lisa Erb, Cathy Cox and Gloria Budz

Be it further RESOLVED, that these students and their teachers be presented with a copy of this Resolution signed by the members of the School Committee.

ADMINISTRATION – PERSONNEL

A motion was made by Mr. Gale and seconded by Mrs. Culhane for discussion on Resolution No: 13-02-02.

Dr. Lundsten:

At this time, Dr. Lundsten is withdrawing the first name on the Resolution.

There being no further discussion on the Resolution the roll was taken and voted unanimously to approve with the first name being withdrawn.

NO. 13-02-02 – RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following certified personnel be appointed for the remainder of the 2012-2013 school year:

Samantha Filippo, Step 12

Education...URI, BS

Experience...Cranston Substitute

Certification...Secondary Math

Assignment...Park View 1.0 FTE

Effective Date...January 29, 2013

Authorization...Replacement

Fiscal Note...12311810 51110

Jennifer Marcello, Step 12

Education...Quinnipiac University

Experience...East Providence School Department

License...Occupational Therapy

Assignment...Itinerant .5 FTE

Effective Date...February 25, 2013

Authorization...New

Fiscal Note...11617070 51110

A motion was made by Mrs. Culhane and seconded by Mr. Traficante to approve Resolution No. 13-02-07 for discussion:

Mrs. Ruggieri:

I will be recusing myself from this vote.

There being no further discussion the roll was taken as follows:

Mr. Colford Yes Mr. Gale Yes

Mrs. Culhane Yes Mr. Traficante Yes

Ms. Iannazzi Yes Mrs. Ruggieri Recuse

Mrs. McFarland was absent with cause.

NO. 13-02-07 – RESOLVED, that the School Committee approve or reject a Memorandum of Agreement with Teacher “A”.

NO. 13-02-08 - RESOLVED, that the 2013-2014 Operating Budget, as recommended by the Superintendent, be approved.

**Mrs. Culhane made a motion to discuss Resolution No. 13-02-08.
Motion was seconded by Mrs. Ruggieri.**

At this time, Ms. Iannazzi asked that Mrs. Culhane take over the chair.

Ms. Iannazzi:

Amendment on Resolution No. 13-02-08:

To begin, I just want to make a general comment. Obviously it is about priorities and you will not find anyone in Cranston who has more respect or admiration for the employees that comprise Cranston Public Schools than I do. However, we are a team and that needs to be recognized. When one group struggles, we all struggle. Right now our custodians are struggling. They accepted a 15% pay cut and they took that sacrifice to assist our students and our taxpayers through a very difficult economic climate here in Cranston. When one group sacrifices as much as this group has, in my opinion, it's unfair for any other individual or group of individuals to receive a pay

raise. I think Nathan Goodrich said it well; he said that this budget doesn't make sense because we are laying off human capital and it's costing us more money to lay off people. I don't believe in that; I don't believe in lay-offs to give raises so I would propose an amendment to eliminate the 2% raise for every bargaining unit that it was provided for and also to reduce the pension contributions by the same amount as the 2% raise.

This motion was seconded by Mrs. Ruggieri for discussion:

Mr. Gale:

I agree with the comments that the chair, Ms. Iannazzi, made. I find it hard to give raises to peopleeveryone deserves a raise in my opinion but to have one group take such a hard hit; 15% cut in pay; plus an increase in their health care costs; it is something that I can't justify in my mind. I also quite frankly don't know if we would be able to get the money from the City in order to pay for that and that is a big concern of mine. I don't want to send something to the City that basically has a huge added rate to it in money because we all know that the schools don't have any money and the City doesn't have any money without raising taxes. Nobody wants their taxes raised. It's a really difficult situation to vote on this. I believe that I have to, just out of a sense of fairness and also for the taxpayers of Cranston. Thank you.

Raymond Votto:

I know that the document that the chairperson has in front of her says “bargaining groups” but to be more specific for the public and for the press, all those folks in that bargaining group; you might just want to name them all. Some of them are administrators that are not part of a bargaining group.

Ms. Iannazzi:

It’s teachers, teacher assistants, technical assistants, bus drivers, certified administrators, non-certified administrators, and central administration for a total reduction in the budget of \$1,895,213.

Mr. Traficante:

I have mixed emotions about this and I’ll tell you why. It wasn’t too long ago that the budget was approved by the City Council which included a pay increase for members on the municipal side. It was a modest increase but it was an increase. Here we have people in this school department who have not received a raise in 6 or 7 years and they are doing a fabulous job under the circumstances. I realize this pay raise means about \$1.9 million that will be erased from the proposal by the Superintendent and it’s certainly a big cut and I realize the City Council will look upon this as detrimental if we included it in the budget. I just feel as though I guess I’m of the opinion that perhaps we should send this budget forward to the Mayor and to the City Council and let’s find out when the City Council and the Mayor are going to become educationally friendly and when they are going to realize that education is a priority. I’m sick and tired

of us taking a back seat to save these services like senior services and public works. The kids of this City deserve better than this. That's why I have mixed emotions.

At this time, the roll was taken on the Amendment:

Mr. Gale Yes Mr. Colford Yes

Mrs. Culhane Yes Mrs. Ruggieri Yes

Mr. Traficante No Ms. Iannazzi Yes

Note: Mrs. McFarland was absent with cause.

Ms. Iannazzi (AMENDMENT)

First of all, I think the School Committee as a whole; we have all heard the concerns from the Middle School both from the community and from the teachers present. I would propose an amendment (you should all have the documentation – SEE HANDOUT) that I requested earlier today, to reinstate 100% of the Middle School cuts for an additional expense of \$482,000. I would offer that in the form of an amendment.

The motion was seconded for discussion:

Ms. Iannazzi:

I want to just caution the middle school teachers and the middle school community leaders out there; the School Committee is acting in good faith and we're going to continue to propose amendments but this decision ultimately is not necessarily in our hands. These cuts

may or may not be revisited depending upon the Mayor and the City Council's funding allocation so I want you to know that while we're acting in good faith and it's our intent, or my intent, to restore these cuts, you have to play a role in this process as well and you have to play a role by attending the finance committee meeting before the Council and voicing your concerns about any further cuts to the middle school level.

Mr. Traficante:

The proposal that you brought forth, Superintendent, saved X amount of dollars, I assume in the budget. By reversing the proposal, roll that and add back to the budget. I haven't had a chance to read this.

Superintendent Lundsten:

If 100% of the Middle School teachers proposed and are restored, that would put an additional \$482,000 back in Fund I.

Mrs. Ruggieri:

I just wanted to bring up a point regarding the Math and all of these issues that have been going on. When my son was in either Kindergarten or first grade, the Math Curriculum changed and we brought investigations into the mix. There's no middle school component for Investigations so what happened was these kids were going through elementary school learning this new Math which was confusing if you are not a visual learner; confusing for a number of reasons. When they moved into the middle school Math was Math,

the way that we learned Math. Some of the teachers would notice that it took these investigations kids longer to do the Math because they didn't really know the basic Math skills; the multiplication tables; all the things that you would think that a regular Math program would have. One of the things that I would like to see with this concern with Math continues to move on, my son is now in 8th grade and actually struggles a little bit with Math, that we look at the actual curriculum going back to the elementary school.

Another addition to that is when you look at your NECAP testing, the language on the NECAP test is different from the language of the Math that we are teaching our kids. Some kids may not be performing well because they don't understand the language; there's a different word being used in the test than there is in their curriculum. That was something that we talked about a number of years ago and now moving on if we're changing to another testing system; I don't know what the language is for that test too but when we talk about aligning our curriculum and our standards and our testing, that's something that we really need to look at because those are two areas that when we talk about the problem with Math that are almost no brainers that we look at and we say that our kids need basic skills in addition to maybe this type of Math. That's something that when we look at a budget and we're looking at what we're creating curriculum-wise that I think has to have some kind of meat in it as well. I think we should address that.

Superintendent Lundsten:

In regards to the Math Curriculum, two years ago we entered into an agreement through the “Race to the Top” funding to look not only at English Language Arts but our Math Curriculum. We’ve been working with the University of Texas, the DANA Center, so that the scope and sequence of the curriculum has been revised. As many of you are aware we also worked cooperatively with the teachers’ union to make sure that the program supervisor now is K-12 so that we will get a clear line; a vertical alignment as well as a horizontal alignment on the curriculum. That certainly is in process. As a matter of fact, yesterday morning all of the principals had a Professional Development with the Math Supervisor. Not only looking at the current status of what we’re doing and I agree with you about the language because I observed it myself when I was a principal walking through the classroom when the kids were taking the NECAP. I knew kids knew the answer but when they actually read the problem, they got hung up in the language of the problem. I don’t think that’s going to change; I’ve seen samples from the PARCC Assessment, which will be the next new assessment; I’m not sure that’s going to change. To me it looks like it’s heavily language based also; however, we are addressing that and I agree with the teacher who stood up and said it starts back in Kindergarten and we do need an All-Day K. So, that’s certainly on the agenda to look at but we are addressing the curriculum, the alignment of the curriculum and the resources we are using because with the Common Core coming into effect and we need to have it fully implemented next year, there’s a shift in the Math. The kids need to know all the multiplication facts by the end of

third grade and they need to know them with automaticity; they need to know them so they can move into fractions in Grade 4 which will then help the middle school Math, getting ready for algebra.

Mr. Gale:

Could the Superintendent or Mr. Balducci tell me what the teacher/student ratio is now in both middle and elementary schools and then what the ratio would be between the teachers and students with your budget as presented without any amendments to it.

Dr. Lundsten:

I'm going to ask Joe to help me with the middle schools; what the teams look like.

Mr. Rotz:

Currently our class size at Bain would be for 7th and 8th grade roughly 20/21 students for 2013-2014. If we reduced the teams then the class sizes would grow to 26 which would be six additional students per class. That would be at Park View and Western Hills. These are projections with the 6th grade coming into Park View and then the 7th grade going on to the 8th grade. That's for the fall of 2014. The fall of 2015 the numbers would be 23 at Park View and 24 at Western Hills entering the 7th grade and in 8th grade, 21 at Park View and 22 at Western Hills.

Dr. Lundsten:

Also, when you look at the elementary schools, I've got the numbers per classroom. They vary anywhere from 19 to 26 per classroom. I've got 13 classrooms that are sitting at 26 right now. I also have, for example, at Arlington the second grades are sitting at 19 each. It varies by building. I see 25 in the 5th grade at Barrows but then in the second grade they are at 18. The bottom would be approximately 18 and the top would be at 26 with a few sitting at 27.

Mr. Rotz:

I just want to clarify one item for you because I want to be accurate with my numbers. For 2015, projected class size with the smaller teams at Park View and Western Hills, the 7th graders would be at 28 students. That would be entering 7th grade and the 8th grade which would be 26 at Park View and Western Hills would be 25. The following year they go back down.

Mrs. Ruggieri:

That was actually my question at the last meeting and I didn't receive any actual dollar amounts attached that ...I was concerned because when we got this information regarding the middle school it didn't seem to project out any further than the two years and that concerned me because I went back to something that we received in September regarding capped classrooms. I know those numbers change up and down but if we go back to what Mr. Rotz was saying we look at it and I could go backwards but our Grade 1 right now is around 813 from

September. Our Grade 2 is 780; Our Grade 3 is 845; Grade 4 is 802; Grade 5 is 854; so there's fluctuations but to not move further out to see where we currently are in our elementary schools; to make this kind of change because this year maybe we don't have as many and then the next year we may be ok; but the next year we might not be ok. It makes me very uncomfortable to know that these classrooms sizes will be going up and down like that. It doesn't make it easy for anyone to work in a classroom like that and it certainly doesn't make it easy for our students. My concern, at the last meeting, was that this projection doesn't seem to go further and it really needs to. I go back to the 6th grade move which I was very vocal about being against and it directly affected my daughter who was going into 6th grade that year so I attended every hearing and I attended every meeting. It was actually one of the things that spurred me to run for School Committee because I didn't really think that it was planned out as far along as it should be and this concerns me for the same reasons.

The roll on the amendment only was taken:

Mrs. Culhane: Yes Mr. Gale: Yes

Mr. Colford Yes Mrs. Ruggieri Yes

Mr. Traficante Yes Ms. Iannazzi Yes

Mrs. McFarland was absent with cause.

Ms. Iannazzi:

I have one more amendment and then I will let the administrators

explain the Math plan. As has been covered by the media, Superintendent Lundsten and Colonel Palumbo and Mayor Fung had been meeting to discuss safety issues in our schools and the suggestion came from Colonel Palumbo that we consider hiring a Safety Coordinator who would be an individual who would make sure that safety concerns are uniform throughout all of our buildings and make sure that all drills are adhered to and that the same policy that works on the Eastern side of the City, works on the Western side of the City and would also work on evacuation type plans in the event of an incident and make sure that they are suitable for each of the individual building structures. I would propose that we add this position to the budget at a stipend of \$7,500 with the hopes that we could attract a retired Law Enforcement Officer to fulfill that role. I offer that in the form of an amendment.

The motion for an amendment was seconded by Mr. Gale. The roll was taken:

Mr. Colford Yes Mrs. Culhane Yes

Mr. Gale Yes Mr. Traficante Yes

Mrs. Ruggieri Yes Ms. Iannazzi Yes

Mrs. McFarland was absent with cause.

Mrs. Culhane:

I expressed at the last meeting how concerned I was about our Special Education set-aside budget and I feel that it's very important that we fund that to where it was when we originally established that

budget, which I believe it was the \$680,170 under other revenue.

Mr. Balducci: In the 11-12 City Budget there's approximately \$750,000 but then in the 12-13 current budget it stands at \$370,000. Mrs.

Culhane: I would like to propose that we fund that to what the number was. Mr. Balducci: If you're asking for the City to level fund their contribution...

Mrs. Culhane: Not their contribution but to set it to what we had originally asked for in the original budget proposal from last year. Mr.

Balducci: I would say it would be approximately \$693,000. Mrs.

Culhane: I would like to propose that we make that fund; again it is a set-aside fund; it is not something that we would be using but a fund that was identified by the audit committee and by the auditors that we have that Special Education set aside which clearly this year we did need, although we didn't use it in the previous year, we did need it this year. The Mayor took it upon himself to de-fund it by \$500,000. I would like to see that to the full funding from what we proposed; the School Committee proposed in the 2011-2012 budget.

This motion was seconded by Mr. Gale for discussion:

Mrs. Ruggieri:

I would actually like to add that we place a friendly amendment that we place that account on hold for two years in order for us to be able to go back and assess what that dollar amount looks like in the second year because as we said, we did not use it in the first year; but we needed it this year and it wasn't there so if we could somehow

present it to the Mayor.

Mr. Balducci:

Again, the amendment that was discussed right now, I will remove \$693,000 from the expenditures side of this budget with the request that the City fund a reserve at the same dollar amount. Discussions have to take place between us and the City for them to establish a full reserve funds that if none of that \$693,000 is used or partial amount remains that it is allowed to carry forward into the next year. That's their prerogative but of course we can ask that they do that.

Mrs. Culhane:

I would like to ask that when we do that we refer back to the original language of the auditors that recommended that during that time period. I think it's very important. I was really saddened to see that that the Mayor did that in the last budget cycle. I was happy the City Council did try to restore some of that funding but I'm in agreement with the friendly amendment that it's something that needs to be set in place, clearly again with the understanding that if we don't use it, it rolls over into the next budget and it is only for that specific fund so that then we can do an analysis to see if that needs to grow or not in future budgets but with the understanding that "yes" that does have to come from the other side.

Mr. Gale:

Mrs. Ruggieri would you explain a little bit more on the friendly amendment of holding it for two years.

Mrs. Ruggieri:

Originally when it was done, it was the recommendation of the auditors that money be set aside in a fund and be held in that fund so that if we had a year like this year, we didn't go into a deficit; that the money was there; that's what it was for. That money was supposed to remain in that fund so if we didn't use it one year and we needed it the next, it was there. It wouldn't move money in and out of the City and it wouldn't move money in and out of our budget. That money was to remain in that account. That was the language of the auditor; that was the language as it was presented to the City Council and the Mayor at the time of our Budget Presentation. Unfortunately, that's not what happened. The first year the money was funded there and the second year the Mayor and his administration decided to cut that fund down to nearly nothing and obviously what end up happening was exactly what we predicted could happen and that was why our concern was that that money just be held there so that there is no movement either way; if we don't need it, it just stays there. When it comes time and we need it, it's there and there's no fluctuation in budget. Mr. Gale: So with that part of money you would basically be replenished; you would end up using the money by the City. A discussion ensued.

Mr. Traficante:

Mr. Gale, it is a totally restricted fund and the good part about that is that when the City makes its adjustments in the fourth quarter by Charter, they cannot tap into that fund to adjust their budget to replenish a line item that they are short handed in.

The roll on this amendment was taken:

Mr. Gale Yes Mrs. Ruggieri Yes

Mr. Colford Yes Mrs. Culhane Yes

Mr. Traficante Yes Ms. Iannazzi Yes

Mrs. McFarland was absent with cause.

Mrs. Ruggieri:

We haven't had any discussion as of yet regarding our capital budget and one of the things that I noticed was that there's nothing in here to provide for infrastructure as far as us planning for the needed upgrades for the PARCC Assessment. If that comes into Cranston, for any of us who have sat on the Portfolio Committees, when you're in the high school and you're just trying to get through a couple of hundred students trying to do their portfolio, computers crash. My concern is that we have the entire district on computers trying to take a standardized test; our buildings are not going to be able to handle it and while I know that this is a proposed budget and a proposed project briefing, I think that we need to be pre-emptive and pro-active in addressing this issue because the PARCC test is coming and we are not at all prepared structurally.

Ms. Iannazzi:

If I could just stop the line of questioning at this point because the Capital Budget was not advertised for this evening; we're going to put that on the agenda for the February 26th meeting so we can have a discussion on it at that point.

Ms. Iannazzi asked if there were any other proposed amendments. There being none, at this time, Ms. Iannazzi asked Assistant Superintendent Nota-Masse if she wanted to explain the hand out (on file in the Superintendent's office) regarding the Math issues that need to be addressed. There are a few different plans that were presented here in lieu of the plan that was presented in your budget so I would just asked if you could walk the School Committee through each of these plans.

Assistant Superintendent Nota-Masse:

The document you have in front of you reflects collaboration between the administration and members of the leadership of the CTA. We met to discuss some possible scenarios to offer remediation programs for our students and while they are certainly again not something that we're excited about; we would like to offer more exciting or student passionate programs. It is the reality that we are living in with the Math crisis. Unfortunately that is happening in the State right now. Again, as a district we are held accountable to offer programs for the students who are not performing at a proficient level on the State test. That is not something we are creating on our own;

those are determinations made by the Department of Ed as Mrs. Larkin pointed out earlier this evening. We did sit down and try to be creative and think of ways that we could offer the programs and the remediation necessary while still preserving the integrity of the middle schools. As a result of that meeting, Mr. Rotz and I put together the plan that was discussed with Mrs. Larkin and Mr. Santangelo. There are a couple of iterations of the plan.

At this time, Mrs. Nota-Masse went through all the plans.

A question was asked by Mr. Gale: How many students would be involved potentially in an after school program.

Answered by Mrs. Nota-Masse: We did have those NECAP numbers of students who achieved 1's and 2's in their math; right now I'm looking at grades 6 and 7 so this would affect these two cohorts of students. We have 139 students (district-wide) who achieved a 1 on Math and 149 who achieved a 2. For those of you who are NECAP savvy, a 2 is considered passing; however, it is not a place where we're comfortable with our students going on to high school because our data has shown that even students who achieve a 2 at the middle school are at risk of back sliding by the time they take it in the 11th grade to not achieve proficiency in the 11th grade. So we have 288 students in the 7th grade and then in the 6th grade which is coming in to the middle school, we have 152 students who achieved a 1 and 159 students who achieved a 2. This is strictly Math; it is not the ELA

portion of the NECAP, which is 311 students. Those two cohorts, 288 in grade 7 and 311 in grade 6 would be the students that we would be gearing these programs for to give them the enrichment or ramp up that we feel they would benefit from.

Mr. Gale: The total for the year is \$75,000? That's both after school and summer programs together?

Mrs. Nota-Masse: That is just for the after school programs. A summer school program; we're approximating a good quality summer school program that would cost approximately \$15,000 per middle school.

Mrs. Culhane: I just want to note for people out in the crowd that aren't getting some of the lingo, Fund 1 is this budget that we have right here. When we talk about Fund 1, that isn't any of our grant monies or anything like that. Don't confuse that with Title 1. Fund 1 is this budget, \$139 million that's being proposed right now. Title II is our grant monies that are not title I grant monies that are linked to the schools that have poverty issues. Title II monies don't appear in this budget. That is separate from what is budgeted here.

Dr. Lundsten:

Also so you are aware about Title II. Title II can only be spent for Professional Development; it can't be used for anything else. That's

why it's appropriate if we were going to go this way to take these three teachers out of that but what we also need to understand is that when we remove those ...we put those salaries in there, it will take other Professional Development opportunities away from our staff because we won't be able to fund...for example it would affect the elementary and it would also affect the secondary. We are concerned because we've been hearing rumors that we may get an 8% cut across the board for not only Title II but Title III, Title I and our Special Education additional fund.

Mrs. Culhane:

Of the students that achieve a 1 or a 2 on the NECAPS, I asked this of the Commissioner once and got a very vague answer, what is the probability that those students would not be achieving a "C" or better in class. I think a part of the concern was that some of these students were saying that they may not do well on NECAP but they've got a decent grade in school; while some may not see a "C" as a decent grade; "C" is average so I just think it's important to know that because that was a question that was asked of the Commissioner and she didn't really answer it. It was very vague and my concern is that of these students what percent of them are performing at a below average grade.

Mrs. Nota-Mass:

I do have those numbers. We have very deeply studied data to try to look for those patterns so that we're not approaching these programs

with just anecdotal evidence; we really want to focus on the students that need it. We have students, and while an anomaly, who are in Algebra II taking the NECAP test and generally overall they fair quite well on the NECAP; however, we also have students who are in pre-calculus who scored a 1. They are in pre-calculus which means they've been able to achieve in Math to the point where they're in a rather advanced Math class and their current grade is a "C" or better. A lengthy discussion ensued. We have the responsibility to have the skills necessary to graduate our students from our high schools and be able to get a good job, to go to the college of their choice and to have options available to them. I think that having a high quality program in every subject will enable students to do that. That is our responsibility. I agree looking at it from the Kdg. and the curriculum and the whole Math picture and we are doing that and we are working on that.

Mrs. Culhane:

Is any of this that we're doing intervention type programming geared towards some of our "warning schools" or some of our....how much of this is a response to the actual mandates that have come down because of issues with NECAPS in the schools from RIDE.

Mrs. Nota-Masse:

Our "warning schools" have been deemed for different reasons. We have six elementary schools that have been deemed in "warning status" and for those of you who are unfamiliar with that, previously

the score sheet used to come out from RIDE and you were a “blue ribbon school”, a “proficient with distinction” and there are banners hanging in some of our schools noting how wonderful and how great our students have achieved and all the great things we did and then the next year, we’re told they’re on “warning status”. The targets have changed. It is not just NECAP; it is a variety of criteria that they looked at and I know there are some principals sitting out in that audience that were quite shocked that their students and their schools were deemed in “warning status” because of a somewhat moving target. NECAP alone does not determine a “warning status”; it is part of a bigger picture but it does carry some weight.

Ms. Iannazzi:

What if we do a Plan C which would essentially be Plan B but shifting all of the funding to Fund 1 instead of using any Title II money and that would enable us to reserve Title II money for Professional Development which is needed in other areas, common core, etc. It would also provide a minute safety net in that if we do have Title II or additional Title II monies that are available that might be a budget revision we might be able to make later on. I don’t know procedurally or grant wise whether or not that make sense but

Mrs. Nota-Masse:

It would be a cost avoidance to use Mr. Balducci’s terminology, of \$225,000 to our Title II Grants. Ms. Iannazzi pointed out that she is looking at Plan B is.....(at this time, Mrs. Nota-Masse explained Plan

B).

Mrs. Culhane assumed the chair.

Ms. Iannazzi:

I would propose an amendment to the budget to include a line item of \$532,589.40 which would be the justification for Plan B so essentially that would add 6 FTE's all of which would come from Fund 1, the After School Ramp up Program and the Summer Program. I offer that in the form of an amendment.

Seconded by Mrs. Ruggieri for discussion:

Mr. Traficante:

Madam Chair, we were just handed these plans tonight. There's a lot to digest here; I'm not about to vote on any plan what-so-ever, that includes Plan A, Plan B, After School Programs, Virtual Math, Transportation....I want to study this. I want to know what I'm talking about; I want to make sure that what's impacted and what is not impacted. I don't think we should be approving any plan tonight. This should be held off until our next meeting to give us a chance to digest what's before us.

Ms. Iannazzi:

I have no problem withdrawing the amendment, Mr. Traficante.

Mr. Votto:

I know you have another meeting but we're going to have to make sure we make a decision at some point. You did not bring up at all the business position that was cut nor Family & Consumer Science. As long as we're all understanding that.

Also, you made a suggestion a few minutes ago regarding warning the middle school teachers that this isn't a done deal because we have to wait until we get our funding from the City and in June we'll be looking at whatever that happens to be as well as any future amendments you may make in the next couple of weeks in terms of adding monies to the operating fund. What I want clarification on, not tonight but when you conclude your budget deliberation, is what are we going to do with the layoff teachers? Because quite honestly, by restoring the Middle School as it is today, there are people on this list that could be recalled but I know that we are cautious in a sense as when we recall because of our needs budgetary on the City side. All I'm asking for is when you do decide and you close the budget deliberations and you vote on a final budget, you give us direction on those particular items that I just mentioned: layoffs, business teacher and Family and Consumer Science.

Ms. Iannazzi:

Can I have a motion to Table this Resolution No. 13-02-08 until February 26th at 5:00 p.m.? The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ruggieri and the roll was taken:

Mr. Colford Yes Mrs. Culhane Yes

Mr. Gale Yes Mrs. Ruggieri Yes

Mr. Traficante Yes Ms. Iannazzi Yes

Mrs. McFarland was absent with cause.

Public Hearing on Non-agenda items:

Allen Davis, 65 Oaklawn Avenue

I am a retired Cranston Police officer; where do I sign up for that job.

Mr. Traficante swore me in 22-23 years ago and I've been very vocal in the social media about the safety of the kids in the schools and I'm here to put my money where my mouth is. I told everybody on line that read the threads that there is a need for security officers in the schools and retired police officers from the City are the best way to go about it until the rest of the world can solve all the other problems.

I will even offer you that if you took the \$7,500 stipend and donated it back to an After School Music Program; I will do it for free. Everybody here has been taking cuts in pay; I'm not going to take any money when everybody else is getting cut when you're talking about the safety of the kids in school. That's where I stand on that. If that gets posted; I wish I know how it would get posted; I'd sign up right now.

Mr. Cascione was here talking about questions and that was going to be the crux of what I wanted to speak about. We had, a couple of weeks ago when I was here, I was told that any answering of any

questions was a violation of law by the chair. As your own lawyer just pointed out that answering questions is not a violation of the law. You're being directed by your own attorney not to do that. But when you read the Statute, as your lawyer clearly stated, you can comment on any of the questions that are for informational purposes. That was what I brought up two weeks ago. This board needs to ...if you want people to participate; take a look at just what happened tonight. The Assistant Principal mentioned something and we had to stop in the middle because we had an issue about no one understood what some of those meant. There are some very bright people in the back of this room that when "what's plan b" there was an answer; there was give and take back and forth that technically under your own advice you weren't supposed to do but I'm so glad that you did. The more open; the easier you make these questions to be answered, the smarter the people that are going to be that walk into this room and the more of them. The smarter are people that come in here to offer ideas is going to make solving these issues that much easier. If you're worried about violating the Open Meeting Law Act; I'm told through one of the social media threads you have an attorney on retainer. He should be sitting at this desk so that if there's a question that's asked, he can look up and say, "You don't want to answer that question". Protect yourselves; I understand that. Go to a City Council Meeting; that City Council has their attorneys sitting in the back. Mr. Traficante will...way back when had his attorneys there if there were any issues. Have someone there. Be open about it. Answer the simple questions. It's the policy that the chairperson is

said not to answer questions. It's not the Law. Change the policy; answer the simple questions; get your lawyers here to keep you guys from going over the slippery slope; that's a simple solution that would serve everybody's purpose. It's not hard; open it up; fill the seats in this room with the brightest people in this City to help you solve your problems. Thank you.

Mrs. Arena had some prepared remarks that were left at the meeting which are on file in the Superintendent's Office attached to these minutes.

Announcement of Future Meetings

Our future meetings will be held on February 26th at 5:00 here at Western Hills Middle School and March 13th and 18th, 2013.

Adjourn Public Work Session

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Gale, seconded by Mrs. Ruggieri. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea M. Iannazzi

School Committee Chairperson

(TO RESCHEDULE MEETING OF FEB. 11, 2013)

CRANSTON SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEETING

BUDGET ADOPTION

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2013

WESTERN HILLS MIDDLE SCHOOL

400 PHENIX AVENUE

EXECUTIVE SESSION: 6:00 P.M.

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED BY PUBLIC MEETING

IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWED BY PUBLIC BUDGET WORK SESSION

MINUTES

The Budget Adoption meeting of the Cranston School Committee was held on the evening of the above date at Western Hills Middle School with the following members present: Ms. Iannazzi, Mr. Traficante, Mrs. Ruggieri, Mr. Trent, Mr. Gale, and Mrs. Culhane. Mrs. McFarland was absent with cause.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m. It was moved by Mrs. Ruggieri and seconded by Mr. Gale and unanimously carried that the members adjourn to Executive Session pursuant to RI State Laws – PL 42-46-5(a)(1) Personnel:

- a. (Discussion of Termination of Non-Certified Employee “A”)**
- b. (Discussion of a Memorandum of Agreement between Cranston School**

Committee and Teacher “A”)

PL 42-46-5(a)(2) Collective Bargaining and Litigation:

- a. (Contract Negotiations’ Update – Secretaries)**
- b. (Teachers)**

Call to Order – Public Session was called to order at 7:00 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was conducted and the roll was called. A quorum was present.

Ms. Iannazzi reported out that no votes were taken in Executive Session.

Executive Session Minutes Sealed – February 14, 2013 – A motion to seal the minutes of Executive Session was made by Mr. Gale and seconded by Mrs. Culhane. The roll was called; all were in favor.

Minutes of Previous Meetings Approved – January 7 & 10, 2013 – A motion was made to approve the above minutes from January 7th and 10th, 2013 by Mr. Trent and seconded by Mrs. Culhane. The roll was

called. All were in favor.

Public Acknowledgements / Communications – There are none.

Chairperson's Communications – Ms. Iannazzi, at this time, asked Attorney Cascione to provide to the public with his legal advice that he has provided the School Committee with regards to the Open Meetings Act.

Attorney Cascione – My understanding; this question is with regard to the Public Hearing that you have on “Non-Agenda Items”. The Open Meetings Law with regard to that type of thing states: That you are not required to even have such an Agenda Item. It also states that you are under no obligation to, if you do have it, to respond to any questions from the public; however, you can if it is for informational purposes only. My advice to the School Committee is that you should not be responding because if you cross the line for informational into business of the School Committee, you're going to be liable for an Open Meetings violation. The purpose of the Open Meetings Law is that everything that you do, as far as the business of the School Committee, is supposed to be open in public and with notice to the public so if it's a non-agenda item, the rest of the public doesn't have notice of and somebody brings up something that you respond to and suddenly it becomes a discussion. You can be deemed to be doing business without the proper notice which would be a violation. My advice is that you can listen but you should not be

responding or engaging in conversation on that.

Ms. Iannazzi – Just to take that one step further, if any member of the public at any time has any question for any member of the School Committee, our contact information; both phone number and e-mail; is listed not only on the Cranston Public Schools website but also on the Secretary of State website and the City of Cranston's website.

Superintendent's Communications

Superintendent Lundsten – Good evening. Today when the Cranston Herald was published, the Kindergarten Registration Schedule was also published; however, the Herald published the wrong information.

They published last years' schedule not this years' schedule. If you would all please take note that they are going to re-publish the correct dates that had been submitted to them in next week's Herald. We also have it up on the Cranston Public Schools website and I'm going to be asking the principals to notify everybody in their e-mail blast so that they don't have any parents with the incorrect dates. Thank you.

School Committee Member Communications

Mrs. Culhane – Thank you. I was reading the Cranston Herald Editorial section this week and I noticed on Feb. 6th there was an editorial by a gentleman who actually did run for school committee in this last election and I want to correct him on something he said

because I think it's very important that the public understands this. Superintendent Lundsten was not promoted into her position. We posted the position; we interviewed for the position; we looked at several candidates over public hearings that many of you attended and that were hours long. We did our own interviews; we had the public submit questions and have an input into who is selected as Superintendent. So for somebody who attempted to run for School Committee to say that we promoted someone to the position of Superintendent, is really an awful misrepresentation; actually quite a misunderstanding of what happened. Superintendent Lundsten was hired for the position through the process of being hired. The same we do for every other position in the City and I think it's important for people to understand that and know that and should stand corrected on that. Thank you.

Public Hearing

- a. Students (Agenda/Non-Agenda Matters) – There were none.**
- b. Members of the Public (Agenda Matters Only) –**

Lizbeth Larkin, teacher at Park View Middle School and President of the Cranston Teachers' Alliance:

As you well know I am very troubled by the proposed budget cuts that are once again going to tremendously impact the educational structure at the Middle School level. Many of the School Committee members were present when the World Language structure was changed to meet 4 X's a week as a core subject. We are diminishing

that program by using that time as a pull out when needed for other at-risk students. You were also present for the economic reasons that the district moved the 6th grade back to the elementary level. This move removed a crucial transition year for students to grow emotionally, academically and also in their organization and study skills. As the Union President, but first and foremost an educator, I have taught grades 3-8 for over 30 years. Superintendent Lundsten stated in her Budget Presentation that we needed to address the needs and the concerns of the school district that is rapidly changing in demographics. We have a 41% poverty rate; a fast growing ELL (English Language Learner) population; demands of a growing need for highly involved Special Education Programs and Services. More than ever we now must address these needs and support the educators, the related service providers and the teacher assistants that are teaching and guiding our students. We should not be cutting staff and overloading classes, only to put in a Math support system for students at risk! One action negates the other!

We also have a problem in this nation and especially in this State with the RIDE leadership who under the guise of "Education Reform" have turned our students into a test score. It is the constant "Quest for the Test". The assessments keep changing, the data analysis changes, they are insisting that our students are going to be assessed into excess! Interventions can be accomplished in many ways rather than having an already struggling and fidgety middle school student have 100 minutes a day of Math instruction. We need to provide support

for small ad hoc groups to be pulled out of class or supported in our classrooms. We need after school programs, summer enrichment and/or support programs.

We constantly hear from the media about students failing Math, think about it. This is not the Math that we all know. Students who do it in their head or find alternate pathways to the answer, fail these tests because not only do the students have to calculate the problem, they have to provide a written detailed explanation of how they got the answer. What if a student is not strong in written language or learning the English language or has a learning disability or attention issues and struggles to meet the criteria. They struggle to meet the criteria with all this while truly understanding the Math and it is discrimination.

NECAP Tests do not accept alternate pathways and will be replaced with the PARCC Test. A totally different assessment. It never ends. In a perfect world we should have an intervention in Pre-K. We need an All-Day Kindergarten. The new Common Core Standards start in Pre-K and All-Day K. We need a return of Literacy aides in K-2 and an addition of numeracy aides in K-2. We need more support for our English Language Learners in our elementary classrooms.

The 6th grade should be moved back to the middle school and making way in the schools for all of the All-Day K. We need to invest in our future; we need to nurture and teach the whole child and not to

a test number. Our students are successful and many years after leaving Cranston Public Schools students don't talk about, "hey I got a 1 or a 2 in the Math NECAP test. They talk about the plays, the performances, the concerts, the special projects, a favorite teacher, the day that made a difference, a good friend, a prom, a winning game. All of this is slowly disappearing. You cannot put a number or a value on this. We need to address all of our children and also vital employees should not be cut or sacrificed to fund these needs. Thank you.

**Audrey Guttin, Presently teaches at Cranston High School West:
Serves as Program Supervisor for Family and Consumer Science.**

Let's look at some numbers. The number 2 – Obesity is the number 2 cause of preventable death in the United States. The number 9 million is the number of children between the ages of 6 and 19 that are overweight. The number 60 million is the number of people 20 years or older who are obese, a condition that increases the risk of health conditions and diseases including breast cancer, coronary heart disease, type II diabetes, gallbladder disease, osteoarthritis, colon cancer, hypertension and stroke. And there are more numbers.

Our lives revolve around numbers. There are SAT scores, ACT scores and NECAP scores. There are numbers that destine our lives and numbers that control our lives. You need a certain SAT score to get into the college of your choice and a certain NECAP score to now

graduate from high school. However, your cholesterol, blood pressure, osteoporosis and diabetes test scores are the numbers that control your life. You see my department is into the numbers game too! We teach real numbers. Your cholesterol, HDL, LDL, blood pressure and weight are the numbers that affect your future health. These are the numbers that determine the quality of your life. Your healthy future is at stake if your numbers aren't correctly interpreted in our curriculum.

So whether you are interpreting the number facts on a nutrition label, studying consumer or personal finance, designing and creating fashion to be worn on the body where there is a constant movement between 2D and 3D viewing geometric structures in the composition of buildings and furniture, math is at the very heart of our curriculum!

Family and Consumer Sciences education classes integrate core academics (Science, math social studies and language arts) and reinforces the content with critical thinking skills and “real world application”. The NECAP questions demonstrate these principles.

Let's concentrate on the number one for a minute. The number one prime objective for educators today is to align their instruction to common core standards and to use resources that connect English Language Arts concepts and skills in the classroom to the outside world. This adds relevance to what is being taught. This is precisely what Family and Consumer Sciences does. As Confucius taught us, “What I hear I forget; what I see I remember; what I do I understand.”

I have only skimmed the surface of what Family and Consumer Sciences education does and can do for the students in our City. I encourage you to continue to support this program as part of the educational program in Cranston. Thank you for this opportunity to speak with you about a very important and vital program area in the Cranston Public School System. I urge you to reconsider the layoff of a veteran teacher in the Family and Consumer Sciences Department. Thank you.

Maahaela Horta: Teaches at Western Hills Middle School

I have major concerns about the proposed Middle School cuts. Middle School students depend on social and academic guidance. Teacher to student ratio is key for the success of teaching and learning alike. It's not a new concept that the more individualized learning is, the better the results. Cutting teams, increasing class size and reducing course options only result in a financial gain for the new Math initiative. With this financial gain as the priority, our students will be the ones to suffer. Less one-on-one time; less individualized attention; less elective course options; less, less, less. Less is neglecting what is best for our students. Enduring what benefits our students is wrong. Running our schools in a businesslike manner with money as a primary focus only results in core customer service and decreased capital gain. These cuts that continue to occur will only lead to parents choosing not to send their student to Cranston Public Schools. Students do not care that

Cranston saved “X” amount of money when they are lost in a Math class with 28 students. Parents do not care that Cranston saved “X” amount of dollars when their children are not getting the personalized education that they deserve. When students are shoved in extra ramped up math classes they miss the creative options that should be available to them. When this happens, our students simply do not enjoy coming to school. I remember when students here at Western Hills a couple of weeks ago were told that they were being pulled out of their UA’s to be part of a IXL extra Math ramp up program. They came back to class discouraged, disappointed and even angry. Ask yourselves what positive gains come from these cuts and remind yourselves that the cliental of our business is impressionable children. Thank you.

Joanne Spaziano: Teaches at Park View Middle School

Good evening. I’m a Cranston resident, a parent of a Cranston School graduate and a teacher at Park View Middle School. I would like to talk about the proposed cuts to Middle School and I would like to talk about the Math as well as cutting teams. I want you to recall that I was here in the past when 6th grade was being sent back to the elementary schools and I stood against that at that time because my belief was that it was purely for financial gain. We have students that come to us now in the 7th grade who have had to leave some of the elementary schools that they went to for five years to go to another elementary school for one year where their education is disrupted

and then come to a new school for 7th grade. I can't tell you how disruptive that is for several of our students on our team just this year. It's not the first year it's happened. Had that been a situation where they had just come to Park View, they would have had three continuous years. That's just one example.

Cutting teams; ok, I get that; population's down; I understand that mathematically. There's not much we can do about that but have we looked at boundaries all across the City; do we need to move boundary lines again? Being a Math teacher myself, I try to bring a lot of fun into my classes and as Mrs. Horta just said, she had students that were angry and upset when they got put into an extra Math class. I do twice a week Math ramp up on my team with students who scored a 1 or a 2 in Math. My kids work on fun and engaging Math activities. They do not do repetitive work so that they're ready for common core testing. There has to be a different way to approach this so students don't say, "Oh my god, I've got more Math". How many people would ever stand up in a crowded room and say, "Hey I can't read". But people will readily stand up in public and say that they don't get math and that they don't know how to do Math all day. It's such a shame. The fact is that it's perpetuated everywhere we go. Even in the school system. We need to make sure that our kids can do Math and that they like doing it. What this really gets back to is Commissioner Gist who's demanded that Math data gets driven right back to the Department of Education and that's what drives our curriculum. She wants the data that backs her PHD

and that's what's driving us because she rolls the whip. If we don't get the data back to her on the Math or on the English; that's what it comes down to so we kind of got our hands tied. Is this what we've become? Thank you.

Ms. Iannazzi noted that the recording secretary has requested that anyone speaking tonight, please hand in their speeches if they have one.

Suzanne Arena, 88 Lakeland Rd.

Just listening to everybody talk about Math and some of the issues which are pretty obvious to everyone; the other issue that we haven't talked about is English and in Grades 1 – 3 you learn to read. If you have a child that is a special education child; a lot of kids have learning disorders when it comes to reading. If you can't read from grades 1-3 and by the 4th grade you pick it up, when you're now reading to learn, there's a huge issue and a lot of your special education teachers have come to me and said, "We need to do early intervention". If we do it early, we spend less in the long run. I'm happy to put something together and maybe budgetary we could cut some costs. I find that we spend way too much money on reading specialists who work with children for years and not even see that a child has dyslexia. Twenty percent of the kids have it and we don't recognize it in Rhode Island. We are trying to work it out with legislation; but I think that this is something that really needs to be looked at as well. It's great to know how to do Math but a lot of kids

who have the same issues with reading also have processing issues with Math and everything else.

Nathan Goodrich: Social Studies teacher at Hugh B. Bain Middle School:

Wanted to also weigh in on the proposed budget that would apply cuts to the middle school level. I too, like many of the people here, was at many of the meetings five years ago when the 6th grade was moved away from the middle school down to our elementary schools.

I saw many people, i.e., teachers, students, parents, stand up and say that they disagreed with this move. But at the time, I understood; I'm a Social Studies teacher and I get economics very well. I understand that sometimes, especially in economic times like this, we need to make cuts that benefit the tax payers like myself in lieu of what may be best for our children and best for our schools and I think that's what was done. The latest round of cuts is something that I cannot stand behind as an educator or a tax payer. What I see is a budget that is larger; that is going to cost myself and many people in this room more money for less teachers; for less people in the classroom; for more students in the classroom and I don't want to mislead anyone. I'm one of the teachers being cut. I'm an 11 year veteran of the Cranston Public Schools and for the fifth time in six years I'm facing not having a job next year. It's not a good feeling. As a tax payer it is incredibly frustrating to see the students that I teach; the kids in my neighborhood have to go to a school where there's going to be less teachers, bigger classes, less programs.

When I got hired there was Middle School Sports. We had a Comprehensive Language Program; we had all of these great programs in the middle school, not to mention just the 6th graders had moved down. Bit by bit you're taking away from these kids. They're great kids; they deserve these programs. We had these programs when we grew up. Many of you here on the School Committee and many of the people sitting in this room went to Hugh B. Bain Middle School. You went to Cranston Public Schools; you had these programs available to you; you didn't care about the cents and dollars; you loved the programs. I think the last thing I have to say is that this morning, I was reading in the Providence Journal about the group of students in Providence who were protesting the NECAP being tied to their Graduation Requirements. The thing that really struck me about it as maybe juvenile and misleading as youths tend to be, they weren't getting up there and saying that their school is terrible and their teachers are terrible or I wish I didn't go to school in Providence. They didn't say that. They like their schools; they enjoy their schools; they want to be at their schools. So do our kids; they want to go to school and enjoy themselves. I just want to give them that opportunity to have the programs that we all enjoyed as youth in Cranston or otherwise and not have to cut programs to increase tax payer contribution in order to have more students in the classroom. It just seems like the most educationally and fiscally irresponsible decision that I ever heard of in my ten years of teaching. Thank you.

Consent Calendar / Consent Agenda

Our proposed consent agenda is as follows:

Resolutions No.'s 13-02-03, 13-02-04 w/addendum, 13-02-5, 13-02-6, and 13-02-9.

A motion was made by Mrs. Ruggieri, seconded by Mr. Colford and unanimously carried.

NO. 13-02-03 – RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following certified personnel be appointed as substitutes on a temporary basis as needed:

Ashley Ryan, Special Ed Elementary\Middle

Mary Chemel, Secondary English

Christine Grzebien, Special Ed Elementary\Middle

Jessica Dunn, Music K-12

Dawn Lancellotti, Elementary

NO. 13-02-04 - RESOLVED, Whereas, there may be more qualified teachers who will apply for current positions, and would be a better fit for the district, and

Whereas, certain positions became available after the teacher selection of July 18, 2012 and more senior and/or qualified teachers may elect to occupy these positions, and

Whereas, there is uncertainty of sufficient Federal, State and local funding for general and categorical programs for the 2013-2014 school year, program reductions, student and district needs, consolidation of classes, re-alignment of staff and elimination of positions to more efficiently and effectively use the school system resources, and

Whereas, positions occupied by retirees must be posted each year, and

Whereas, positions must now be made available for more senior/qualified teachers who are scheduled to return from leave, and

Whereas, the teacher does not have the required certification, and there may be more qualified individuals who will apply for these positions, and

Whereas, because of these concerns, and in accordance with Title 16 of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island, the Superintendent has recommended that the employment of certain teachers be terminated at the end of the 2012-2013 school year, and

Whereas, the Superintendent has sent prior notice to said teachers informing them of the specific reasons for their termination, and

Be it RESOLVED that said teachers be terminated at the close of the school year under provisions of Title 16 of the General Laws of the State of Rhode Island, and

Be it further RESOLVED that the Superintendent notify those teachers of the School Committee's action to terminate their employment.

ADDENDUM TO RESOLUTION NO. 13-02-04

Whereas, there are more qualified individuals available to better meet the needs of the district

NO. 13-02-05 – RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following non-certified personnel be appointed as substitutes on a temporary basis as needed:

Richard Tucci, Custodian

NO. 13-02-06 – RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the termination of the following non-certified employee “A” be accepted.

POLICY AND PROGRAM

NO. 13-02-09 -RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the Superintendent, the following Field Trip(s) of Long Duration/Conference(s) be authorized:

1. Christine Luther-Morris, teacher at Cranston High School West, and 15 students, to travel to Boston, MA to participate in the Twelfth Annual Boston Invitational Model United Nation Conference hosted by the Boston University International Affairs Association from February 22 – 24, 2013, at no cost to the School Department. Please see the attached Field Trip of Long Duration form.

2. Audrey Romanelli, ESL at Horton, to travel to Washington, DC to attend the AFT ELL/SWD Training/Conference from February 27 – March 1, 2013, at no cost to the School Department; funded by AFT. Please see the attached Conference Form.

A motion was made by Mrs. Ruggieri, seconded by Mrs. Culhane and was unanimously carried on Resolution 13-02-01 (Mrs. Ruggieri presented this award). The roll was called and all were in favor.

SPONSORED BY THE SCHOOL COMMITTEE

13-02-01 – WHEREAS, a regional juried art competition was sponsored by the Scholastic Art and Writing organization on January 12, 2013, and

WHEREAS, on January 14th, the Cranston secondary art teachers

were notified that their students had been awarded Gold/Silver Keys in various Visual Arts categories, and

WHEREAS, the students who had been awarded Gold Keys will now be judged on the National Level.

Be it RESOLVED, that the Cranston School Committee wishes to recognize and congratulate the following students for their wonderful achievement:

Cranston High School East:

Gabriel Bielawski, Gold Key - Art - Mixed Media - Self Portrait

Giulia Davis, Gold Key - Art – Drawing – Self Portrait

Giulia Davis, Gold Key - Art Portfolio – The Becoming

Julia Lawson, Silver Key - Art – Painting – Julia

Sandra Lopez-naz, Gold Key – Art - Drawing – Color Wheel Self Portrait

Sandra Lopez-naz, Silver Key – Art – Mixed Media – Turnip

Jamall Osterholm, Gold Key – Portfolio – Drawing – Snake Woman

Monica Phan, Silver Key – Art – Mixed Media – Self Portrait

Emma St. Jean, Silver Key – Art – Drawing – Iceland

Cranston High School West:

Amy Andrews, Gold Key – Art – Drawing – Anime Pride

Francesca Branca, Silver Key – Art – Jewelry – Bead Works

Serena Colizza, Silver Key – Art – Fashion – Elizabethan Armour

Nicholas Corry, Silver Key – Art – Drawing – Live Wire

Annette Deion, Silver Key – Art – Drawing – Meet My Evil Twin, Wrath

Jillian Kelshaw, Silver Key – Art – Drawing – My Grandfather

Alexandra Pizzuti, Gold Key – Portfolio – Drawing – On the Gurney

**Alexandra Smith, Gold Key, America Visions Nominee—Art—Drawing –
“Baegone”, My Grandma**

Austen Tiburcio, Silver Key – Art – Sculpture – Fragile. Face Up.

Park View Middle School:

Joseph Healey, Silver Key – Art – Painting – Self-Portrait

Brenna Rojek, Gold Key – Art – Painting – Fruitilicious

**Alexia White, Silver Key – Art – Mixed Media – One Keeps a Secret
While Others Tell Lies**

Hugh B. Bain Middle School:

**Laney Kong, Silver Key – Art – Mixed Media – Purple Lady, After
Picasso**

Rosemary Savath, Silver Key – Art – Painting – Cubist Pears in Blue

**Leah Struminsky, Silver Key – Art – Painting – Abstract Still-life with
Ukulele**

Western Hills Middle School:

Marina Mocerì, Gold Key – Art – Painting Mixed – Lipstick Trees

Keara Pedroso, Silver Key – Art – Mixed Media – “Kaleigh’s Flowers”

Cranston High School East:

Gabriel Bielawski, Senator Reed Best in Show – Art – Mixed Media – Self Portrait

Teachers:

Jill Cyr, Mary Ann Schultheis, Marty Russell, Valerie Bruzzi, Barbara Voccola, Claudia Venditto, Heidi Copeman, Alicia Hawkins, Lisa Erb, Cathy Cox and Gloria Budz

Be it further RESOLVED, that these students and their teachers be presented with a copy of this Resolution signed by the members of the School Committee.

ADMINISTRATION – PERSONNEL

A motion was made by Mr. Gale and seconded by Mrs. Culhane for discussion on Resolution No: 13-02-02.

Dr. Lundsten:

At this time, Dr. Lundsten is withdrawing the first name on the Resolution.

There being no further discussion on the Resolution the roll was taken and voted unanimously to approve with the first name being withdrawn.

NO. 13-02-02 – RESOLVED, that at the recommendation of the

Superintendent, the following certified personnel be appointed for the remainder of the 2012-2013 school year:

Samantha Filippo, Step 12

Education...URI, BS

Experience...Cranston Substitute

Certification...Secondary Math

Assignment...Park View 1.0 FTE

Effective Date...January 29, 2013

Authorization...Replacement

Fiscal Note...12311810 51110

Jennifer Marcello, Step 12

Education...Quinnipiac University

Experience...East Providence School Department

License...Occupational Therapy

Assignment...Itinerant .5 FTE

Effective Date...February 25, 2013

Authorization...New

Fiscal Note...11617070 51110

A motion was made by Mrs. Culhane and seconded by Mr. Traficante to approve Resolution No. 13-02-07 for discussion:

Mrs. Ruggieri:

I will be recusing myself from this vote.

There being no further discussion the roll was taken as follows:

Mr. Colford Yes Mr. Gale Yes

Mrs. Culhane Yes Mr. Traficante Yes

Ms. Iannazzi Yes Mrs. Ruggieri Recuse

Mrs. McFarland was absent with cause.

NO. 13-02-07 – RESOLVED, that the School Committee approve or reject a Memorandum of Agreement with Teacher “A”.

NO. 13-02-08 - RESOLVED, that the 2013-2014 Operating Budget, as recommended by the Superintendent, be approved.

**Mrs. Culhane made a motion to discuss Resolution No. 13-02-08.
Motion was seconded by Mrs. Ruggieri.**

At this time, Ms. Iannazzi asked that Mrs. Culhane take over the chair.

Ms. Iannazzi:

Amendment on Resolution No. 13-02-08:

To begin, I just want to make a general comment. Obviously it is about priorities and you will not find anyone in Cranston who has more respect or admiration for the employees that comprise Cranston

Public Schools than I do. However, we are a team and that needs to be recognized. When one group struggles, we all struggle. Right now our custodians are struggling. They accepted a 15% pay cut and they took that sacrifice to assist our students and our taxpayers through a very difficult economic climate here in Cranston. When one group sacrifices as much as this group has, in my opinion, it's unfair for any other individual or group of individuals to receive a pay raise. I think Nathan Goodrich said it well; he said that this budget doesn't make sense because we are laying off human capital and it's costing us more money to lay off people. I don't believe in that; I don't believe in lay-offs to give raises so I would propose an amendment to eliminate the 2% raise for every bargaining unit that it was provided for and also to reduce the pension contributions by the same amount as the 2% raise.

This motion was seconded by Mrs. Ruggieri for discussion:

Mr. Gale:

I agree with the comments that the chair, Ms. Iannazzi, made. I find it hard to give raises to peopleeveryone deserves a raise in my opinion but to have one group take such a hard hit; 15% cut in pay; plus an increase in their health care costs; it is something that I can't justify in my mind. I also quite frankly don't know if we would be able to get the money from the City in order to pay for that and that is a big concern of mine. I don't want to send something to the City that basically has a huge added rate to it in money because we all know

that the schools don't have any money and the City doesn't have any money without raising taxes. Nobody wants their taxes raised. It's a really difficult situation to vote on this. I believe that I have to, just out of a sense of fairness and also for the taxpayers of Cranston. Thank you.

Raymond Votto:

I know that the document that the chairperson has in front of her says "bargaining groups" but to be more specific for the public and for the press, all those folks in that bargaining group; you might just want to name them all. Some of them are administrators that are not part of a bargaining group.

Ms. Iannazzi:

It's teachers, teacher assistants, technical assistants, bus drivers, certified administrators, non-certified administrators, and central administration for a total reduction in the budget of \$1,895,213.

Mr. Traficante:

I have mixed emotions about this and I'll tell you why. It wasn't too long ago that the budget was approved by the City Council which included a pay increase for members on the municipal side. It was a modest increase but it was an increase. Here we have people in this school department who have not received a raise in 6 or 7 years and they are doing a fabulous job under the circumstances. I realize this pay raise means about \$1.9 million that will be erased from the

proposal by the Superintendent and it's certainly a big cut and I realize the City Council will look upon this as detrimental if we included it in the budget. I just feel as though I guess I'm of the opinion that perhaps we should send this budget forward to the Mayor and to the City Council and let's find out when the City Council and the Mayor are going to become educationally friendly and when they are going to realize that education is a priority. I'm sick and tired of us taking a back seat to save these services like senior services and public works. The kids of this City deserve better than this. That's why I have mixed emotions.

At this time, the roll was taken on the Amendment:

Mr. Gale Yes Mr. Colford Yes

Mrs. Culhane Yes Mrs. Ruggieri Yes

Mr. Traficante No Ms. Iannazzi Yes

Note: Mrs. McFarland was absent with cause.

Ms. Iannazzi (AMENDMENT)

First of all, I think the School Committee as a whole; we have all heard the concerns from the Middle School both from the community and from the teachers present. I would propose an amendment (you should all have the documentation – SEE HANDOUT) that I requested earlier today, to reinstate 100% of the Middle School cuts for an additional expense of \$482,000. I would offer that in the form of an amendment.

The motion was seconded for discussion:

Ms. Iannazzi:

I want to just caution the middle school teachers and the middle school community leaders out there; the School Committee is acting in good faith and we're going to continue to propose amendments but this decision ultimately is not necessarily in our hands. These cuts may or may not be revisited depending upon the Mayor and the City Council's funding allocation so I want you to know that while we're acting in good faith and it's our intent, or my intent, to restore these cuts, you have to play a role in this process as well and you have to play a role by attending the finance committee meeting before the Council and voicing your concerns about any further cuts to the middle school level.

Mr. Traficante:

The proposal that you brought forth, Superintendent, saved X amount of dollars, I assume in the budget. By reversing the proposal, roll that and add back to the budget. I haven't had a chance to read this.

Superintendent Lundsten:

If 100% of the Middle School teachers proposed and are restored, that would put an additional \$482,000 back in Fund I.

Mrs. Ruggieri:

I just wanted to bring up a point regarding the Math and all of these

issues that have been going on. When my son was in either Kindergarten or first grade, the Math Curriculum changed and we brought investigations into the mix. There's no middle school component for Investigations so what happened was these kids were going through elementary school learning this new Math which was confusing if you are not a visual learner; confusing for a number of reasons. When they moved into the middle school Math was Math, the way that we learned Math. Some of the teachers would notice that it took these investigations kids longer to do the Math because they didn't really know the basic Math skills; the multiplication tables; all the things that you would think that a regular Math program would have. One of the things that I would like to see with this concern with Math continues to move on, my son is now in 8th grade and actually struggles a little bit with Math, that we look at the actual curriculum going back to the elementary school.

Another addition to that is when you look at your NECAP testing, the language on the NECAP test is different from the language of the Math that we are teaching our kids. Some kids may not be performing well because they don't understand the language; there's a different word being used in the test than there is in their curriculum. That was something that we talked about a number of years ago and now moving on if we're changing to another testing system; I don't know what the language is for that test too but when we talk about aligning our curriculum and our standards and our testing, that's something that we really need to look at because those are two areas that when we talk about the problem with Math that are

almost no brainers that we look at and we say that our kids need basic skills in addition to maybe this type of Math. That's something that when we look at a budget and we're looking at what we're creating curriculum-wise that I think has to have some kind of meat in it as well. I think we should address that.

Superintendent Lundsten:

In regards to the Math Curriculum, two years ago we entered into an agreement through the "Race to the Top" funding to look not only at English Language Arts but our Math Curriculum. We've been working with the University of Texas, the DANA Center, so that the scope and sequence of the curriculum has been revised. As many of you are aware we also worked cooperatively with the teachers' union to make sure that the program supervisor now is K-12 so that we will get a clear line; a vertical alignment as well as a horizontal alignment on the curriculum. That certainly is in process. As a matter of fact, yesterday morning all of the principals had a Professional Development with the Math Supervisor. Not only looking at the current status of what we're doing and I agree with you about the language because I observed it myself when I was a principal walking through the classroom when the kids were taking the NECAP. I knew kids knew the answer but when they actually read the problem, they got hung up in the language of the problem. I don't think that's going to change; I've seen samples from the PARCC Assessment, which will be the next new assessment; I'm not sure that's going to change. To me it looks like it's heavily language based also; however, we are

addressing that and I agree with the teacher who stood up and said it starts back in Kindergarten and we do need an All-Day K. So, that's certainly on the agenda to look at but we are addressing the curriculum, the alignment of the curriculum and the resources we are using because with the Common Core coming into effect and we need to have it fully implemented next year, there's a shift in the Math. The kids need to know all the multiplication facts by the end of third grade and they need to know them with automaticity; they need to know them so they can move into fractions in Grade 4 which will then help the middle school Math, getting ready for algebra.

Mr. Gale:

Could the Superintendent or Mr. Balducci tell me what the teacher/student ratio is now in both middle and elementary schools and then what the ratio would be between the teachers and students with your budget as presented without any amendments to it.

Dr. Lundsten:

I'm going to ask Joe to help me with the middle schools; what the teams look like.

Mr. Rotz:

Currently our class size at Bain would be for 7th and 8th grade roughly 20/21 students for 2013-2014. If we reduced the teams then the class sizes would grow to 26 which would be six additional students per class. That would be at Park View and Western Hills.

These are projections with the 6th grade coming into Park View and then the 7th grade going on to the 8th grade. That's for the fall of 2014. The fall of 2015 the numbers would be 23 at Park View and 24 at Western Hills entering the 7th grade and in 8th grade, 21 at Park View and 22 at Western Hills.

Dr. Lundsten:

Also, when you look at the elementary schools, I've got the numbers per classroom. They vary anywhere from 19 to 26 per classroom. I've got 13 classrooms that are sitting at 26 right now. I also have, for example, at Arlington the second grades are sitting at 19 each. It varies by building. I see 25 in the 5th grade at Barrows but then in the second grade they are at 18. The bottom would be approximately 18 and the top would be at 26 with a few sitting at 27.

Mr. Rotz:

I just want to clarify one item for you because I want to be accurate with my numbers. For 2015, projected class size with the smaller teams at Park View and Western Hills, the 7th graders would be at 28 students. That would be entering 7th grade and the 8th grade which would be 26 at Park View and Western Hills would be 25. The following year they go back down.

Mrs. Ruggieri:

That was actually my question at the last meeting and I didn't receive

any actual dollar amounts attached that ...I was concerned because when we got this information regarding the middle school it didn't seem to project out any further than the two years and that concerned me because I went back to something that we received in September regarding capped classrooms. I know those numbers change up and down but if we go back to what Mr. Rotz was saying we look at it and I could go backwards but our Grade 1 right now is around 813 from September. Our Grade 2 is 780; Our Grade 3 is 845; Grade 4 is 802; Grade 5 is 854; so there's fluctuations but to not move further out to see where we currently are in our elementary schools; to make this kind of change because this year maybe we don't have as many and then the next year we may be ok; but the next year we might not be ok. It makes me very uncomfortable to know that these classrooms sizes will be going up and down like that. It doesn't make it easy for anyone to work in a classroom like that and it certainly doesn't make it easy for our students. My concern, at the last meeting, was that this projection doesn't seem to go further and it really needs to. I go back to the 6th grade move which I was very vocal about being against and it directly affected my daughter who was going into 6th grade that year so I attended every hearing and I attended every meeting. It was actually one of the things that spurred me to run for School Committee because I didn't really think that it was planned out as far along as it should be and this concerns me for the same reasons.

The roll on the amendment only was taken:

Mrs. Culhane: Yes Mr. Gale: Yes

Mr. Colford Yes Mrs. Ruggieri Yes

Mr. Traficante Yes Ms. Iannazzi Yes

Mrs. McFarland was absent with cause.

Ms. Iannazzi:

I have one more amendment and then I will let the administrators explain the Math plan. As has been covered by the media, Superintendent Lundsten and Colonel Palumbo and Mayor Fung had been meeting to discuss safety issues in our schools and the suggestion came from Colonel Palumbo that we consider hiring a Safety Coordinator who would be an individual who would make sure that safety concerns are uniform throughout all of our buildings and make sure that all drills are adhered to and that the same policy that works on the Eastern side of the City, works on the Western side of the City and would also work on evacuation type plans in the event of an incident and make sure that they are suitable for each of the individual building structures. I would propose that we add this position to the budget at a stipend of \$7,500 with the hopes that we could attract a retired Law Enforcement Officer to fulfill that role. I offer that in the form of an amendment.

The motion for an amendment was seconded by Mr. Gale. The roll was taken:

Mr. Colford Yes Mrs. Culhane Yes

Mr. Gale Yes Mr. Traficante Yes

Mrs. Ruggieri Yes Ms. Iannazzi Yes

Mrs. McFarland was absent with cause.

Mrs. Culhane:

I expressed at the last meeting how concerned I was about our Special Education set-aside budget and I feel that it's very important that we fund that to where it was when we originally established that budget, which I believe it was the \$680,170 under other revenue.

Mr. Balducci: In the 11-12 City Budget there's approximately \$750,000 but then in the 12-13 current budget it stands at \$370,000. Mrs.

Culhane: I would like to propose that we fund that to what the number was. Mr. Balducci: If you're asking for the City to level fund their contribution...

Mrs. Culhane: Not their contribution but to set it to what we had originally asked for in the original budget proposal from last year. Mr.

Balducci: I would say it would be approximately \$693,000. Mrs.

Culhane: I would like to propose that we make that fund; again it is a set-aside fund; it is not something that we would be using but a fund that was identified by the audit committee and by the auditors that we have that Special Education set aside which clearly this year we did need, although we didn't use it in the previous year, we did need it this year. The Mayor took it upon himself to de-fund it by \$500,000. I would like to see that to the full funding from what we proposed; the School Committee proposed in the 2011-2012 budget.

This motion was seconded by Mr. Gale for discussion:

Mrs. Ruggieri:

I would actually like to add that we place a friendly amendment that we place that account on hold for two years in order for us to be able to go back and assess what that dollar amount looks like in the second year because as we said, we did not use it in the first year; but we needed it this year and it wasn't there so if we could somehow present it to the Mayor.

Mr. Balducci:

Again, the amendment that was discussed right now, I will remove \$693,000 from the expenditures side of this budget with the request that the City fund a reserve at the same dollar amount. Discussions have to take place between us and the City for them to establish a full reserve funds that if none of that \$693,000 is used or partial amount remains that it is allowed to carry forward into the next year. That's their prerogative but of course we can ask that they do that.

Mrs. Culhane:

I would like to ask that when we do that we refer back to the original language of the auditors that recommended that during that time period. I think it's very important. I was really saddened to see that that the Mayor did that in the last budget cycle. I was happy the City Council did try to restore some of that funding but I'm in agreement with the friendly amendment that it's something that needs to be set in place, clearly again with the understanding that if we don't use it, it

rolls over into the next budget and it is only for that specific fund so that then we can do an analysis to see if that needs to grow or not in future budgets but with the understanding that “yes” that does have to come from the other side.

Mr. Gale:

Mrs. Ruggieri would you explain a little bit more on the friendly amendment of holding it for two years.

Mrs. Ruggieri:

Originally when it was done, it was the recommendation of the auditors that money be set aside in a fund and be held in that fund so that if we had a year like this year, we didn't go into a deficit; that the money was there; that's what it was for. That money was supposed to remain in that fund so if we didn't use it one year and we needed it the next, it was there. It wouldn't move money in and out of the City and it wouldn't move money in and out of our budget. That money was to remain in that account. That was the language of the auditor; that was the language as it was presented to the City Council and the Mayor at the time of our Budget Presentation. Unfortunately, that's not what happened. The first year the money was funded there and the second year the Mayor and his administration decided to cut that fund down to nearly nothing and obviously what end up happening was exactly what we predicted could happen and that was why our concern was that that money just be held there so that there is no

movement either way; if we don't need it, it just stays there. When it comes time and we need it, it's there and there's no fluctuation in budget. Mr. Gale: So with that part of money you would basically be replenished; you would end up using the money by the City. A discussion ensued.

Mr. Traficante:

Mr. Gale, it is a totally restricted fund and the good part about that is that when the City makes its adjustments in the fourth quarter by Charter, they cannot tap into that fund to adjust their budget to replenish a line item that they are short handed in.

The roll on this amendment was taken:

Mr. Gale Yes Mrs. Ruggieri Yes

Mr. Colford Yes Mrs. Culhane Yes

Mr. Traficante Yes Ms. Iannazzi Yes

Mrs. McFarland was absent with cause.

Mrs. Ruggieri:

We haven't had any discussion as of yet regarding our capital budget and one of the things that I noticed was that there's nothing in here to provide for infrastructure as far as us planning for the needed upgrades for the PARCC Assessment. If that comes into Cranston, for any of us who have sat on the Portfolio Committees, when you're in the high school and you're just trying to get through a couple of hundred students trying to do their portfolio, computers crash. My

concern is that we have the entire district on computers trying to take a standardized test; our buildings are not going to be able to handle it and while I know that this is a proposed budget and a proposed project briefing, I think that we need to be pre-emptive and pro-active in addressing this issue because the PARCC test is coming and we are not at all prepared structurally.

Ms. Iannazzi:

If I could just stop the line of questioning at this point because the Capital Budget was not advertised for this evening; we're going to put that on the agenda for the February 26th meeting so we can have a discussion on it at that point.

Ms. Iannazzi asked if there were any other proposed amendments. There being none, at this time, Ms. Iannazzi asked Assistant Superintendent Nota-Masse if she wanted to explain the hand out (on file in the Superintendent's office) regarding the Math issues that need to be addressed. There are a few different plans that were presented here in lieu of the plan that was presented in your budget so I would just asked if you could walk the School Committee through each of these plans.

Assistant Superintendent Nota-Masse:

The document you have in front of you reflects collaboration between the administration and members of the leadership of the CTA. We met to discuss some possible scenarios to offer remediation

programs for our students and while they are certainly again not something that we're excited about; we would like to offer more exciting or student passionate programs. It is the reality that we are living in with the Math crisis. Unfortunately that is happening in the State right now. Again, as a district we are held accountable to offer programs for the students who are not performing at a proficient level on the State test. That is not something we are creating on our own; those are determinations made by the Department of Ed as Mrs. Larkin pointed out earlier this evening. We did sit down and try to be creative and think of ways that we could offer the programs and the remediation necessary while still preserving the integrity of the middle schools. As a result of that meeting, Mr. Rotz and I put together the plan that was discussed with Mrs. Larkin and Mr. Santangelo. There are a couple of iterations of the plan.

At this time, Mrs. Nota-Masse went through all the plans.

A question was asked by Mr. Gale: How many students would be involved potentially in an after school program.

Answered by Mrs. Nota-Masse: We did have those NECAP numbers of students who achieved 1's and 2's in their math; right now I'm looking at grades 6 and 7 so this would affect these two cohorts of students. We have 139 students (district-wide) who achieved a 1 on Math and 149 who achieved a 2. For those of you who are NECAP savvy, a 2 is considered passing; however, it is not a place where

we're comfortable with our students going on to high school because our data has shown that even students who achieve a 2 at the middle school are at risk of back sliding by the time they take it in the 11th grade to not achieve proficiency in the 11th grade. So we have 288 students in the 7th grade and then in the 6th grade which is coming in to the middle school, we have 152 students who achieved a 1 and 159 students who achieved a 2. This is strictly Math; it is not the ELA portion of the NECAP, which is 311 students. Those two cohorts, 288 in grade 7 and 311 in grade 6 would be the students that we would be gearing these programs for to give them the enrichment or ramp up that we feel they would benefit from.

Mr. Gale: The total for the year is \$75,000? That's both after school and summer programs together?

Mrs. Nota-Masse: That is just for the after school programs. A summer school program; we're approximating a good quality summer school program that would cost approximately \$15,000 per middle school.

Mrs. Culhane: I just want to note for people out in the crowd that aren't getting some of the lingo, Fund 1 is this budget that we have right here. When we talk about Fund 1, that isn't any of our grant monies or anything like that. Don't confuse that with Title 1. Fund 1 is this budget, \$139 million that's being proposed right now. Title II is our grant monies that are not title I grant monies that are linked to the

schools that have poverty issues. Title II monies don't appear in this budget. That is separate from what is budgeted here.

Dr. Lundsten:

Also so you are aware about Title II. Title II can only be spent for Professional Development; it can't be used for anything else. That's why it's appropriate if we were going to go this way to take these three teachers out of that but what we also need to understand is that when we remove those ...we put those salaries in there, it will take other Professional Development opportunities away from our staff because we won't be able to fund...for example it would affect the elementary and it would also affect the secondary. We are concerned because we've been hearing rumors that we may get an 8% cut across the board for not only Title II but Title III, Title I and our Special Education additional fund.

Mrs. Culhane:

Of the students that achieve a 1 or a 2 on the NECAPS, I asked this of the Commissioner once and got a very vague answer, what is the probability that those students would not be achieving a "C" or better in class. I think a part of the concern was that some of these students were saying that they may not do well on NECAP but they've got a decent grade in school; while some may not see a "C" as a decent grade; "C" is average so I just think it's important to know that because that was a question that was asked of the Commissioner and

she didn't really answer it. It was very vague and my concern is that of these students what percent of them are performing at a below average grade.

Mrs. Nota-Mass:

I do have those numbers. We have very deeply studied data to try to look for those patterns so that we're not approaching these programs with just anecdotal evidence; we really want to focus on the students that need it. We have students, and while an anomaly, who are in Algebra II taking the NECAP test and generally overall they fair quite well on the NECAP; however, we also have students who are in pre-calculus who scored a 1. They are in pre-calculus which means they've been able to achieve in Math to the point where they're in a rather advanced Math class and their current grade is a "C" or better. A lengthy discussion ensued. We have the responsibility to have the skills necessary to graduate our students from our high schools and be able to get a good job, to go to the college of their choice and to have options available to them. I think that having a high quality program in every subject will enable students to do that. That is our responsibility. I agree looking at it from the Kdg. and the curriculum and the whole Math picture and we are doing that and we are working on that.

Mrs. Culhane:

Is any of this that we're doing intervention type programming geared towards some of our "warning schools" or some of our....how much

of this is a response to the actual mandates that have come down because of issues with NECAPS in the schools from RIDE.

Mrs. Nota-Masse:

Our “warning schools” have been deemed for different reasons. We have six elementary schools that have been deemed in “warning status” and for those of you who are unfamiliar with that, previously the score sheet used to come out from RIDE and you were a “blue ribbon school”, a “proficient with distinction” and there are banners hanging in some of our schools noting how wonderful and how great our students have achieved and all the great things we did and then the next year, we’re told they’re on “warning status”. The targets have changed. It is not just NECAP; it is a variety of criteria that they looked at and I know there are some principals sitting out in that audience that were quite shocked that their students and their schools were deemed in “warning status” because of a somewhat moving target. NECAP alone does not determine a “warning status”; it is part of a bigger picture but it does carry some weight.

Ms. Iannazzi:

What if we do a Plan C which would essentially be Plan B but shifting all of the funding to Fund 1 instead of using any Title II money and that would enable us to reserve Title II money for Professional Development which is needed in other areas, common core, etc. It would also provide a minute safety net in that if we do have Title II or additional Title II monies that are available that might be a budget

revision we might be able to make later on. I don't know procedurally or grant wise whether or not that make sense but

Mrs. Nota-Masse:

It would be a cost avoidance to use Mr. Balducci's terminology, of \$225,000 to our Title II Grants. Ms. Iannazzi pointed out that she is looking at Plan B is.....(at this time, Mrs. Nota-Masse explained Plan B).

Mrs. Culhane assumed the chair.

Ms. Iannazzi:

I would propose an amendment to the budget to include a line item of \$532,589.40 which would be the justification for Plan B so essentially that would add 6 FTE's all of which would come from Fund 1, the After School Ramp up Program and the Summer Program. I offer that in the form of an amendment.

Seconded by Mrs. Ruggieri for discussion:

Mr. Traficante:

Madam Chair, we were just handed these plans tonight. There's a lot to digest here; I'm not about to vote on any plan what-so-ever, that includes Plan A, Plan B, After School Programs, Virtual Math, Transportation....I want to study this. I want to know what I'm talking about; I want to make sure that what's impacted and what is not

impacted. I don't think we should be approving any plan tonight. This should be held off until our next meeting to give us a chance to digest what's before us.

Ms. Iannazzi:

I have no problem withdrawing the amendment, Mr. Traficante.

Mr. Votto:

I know you have another meeting but we're going to have to make sure we make a decision at some point. You did not bring up at all the business position that was cut nor Family & Consumer Science. As long as we're all understanding that.

Also, you made a suggestion a few minutes ago regarding warning the middle school teachers that this isn't a done deal because we have to wait until we get our funding from the City and in June we'll be looking at whatever that happens to be as well as any future amendments you may make in the next couple of weeks in terms of adding monies to the operating fund. What I want clarification on, not tonight but when you conclude your budget deliberation, is what are we going to do with the layoff teachers? Because quite honestly, by restoring the Middle School as it is today, there are people on this list that could be recalled but I know that we are cautious in a sense as when we recall because of our needs budgetary on the City side. All I'm asking for is when you do decide and you close the budget deliberations and you vote on a final budget, you give us direction on

those particular items that I just mentioned: layoffs, business teacher and Family and Consumer Science.

Ms. Iannazzi:

Can I have a motion to Table this Resolution No. 13-02-08 until February 26th at 5:00 p.m.? The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ruggieri and the roll was taken:

Mr. Colford Yes Mrs. Culhane Yes

Mr. Gale Yes Mrs. Ruggieri Yes

Mr. Traficante Yes Ms. Iannazzi Yes

Mrs. McFarland was absent with cause.

Public Hearing on Non-agenda items:

Allen Davis, 65 Oaklawn Avenue

I am a retired Cranston Police officer; where do I sign up for that job. Mr. Traficante swore me in 22-23 years ago and I've been very vocal in the social media about the safety of the kids in the schools and I'm here to put my money where my mouth is. I told everybody on line that read the threads that there is a need for security officers in the schools and retired police officers from the City are the best way to go about it until the rest of the world can solve all the other problems.

I will even offer you that if you took the \$7,500 stipend and donated it back to an After School Music Program; I will do it for free. Everybody here has been taking cuts in pay; I'm not going to take any money when everybody else is getting cut when you're talking about

the safety of the kids in school. That's where I stand on that. If that gets posted; I wish I know how it would get posted; I'd sign up right now.

Mr. Cascione was here talking about questions and that was going to be the crux of what I wanted to speak about. We had, a couple of weeks ago when I was here, I was told that any answering of any questions was a violation of law by the chair. As your own lawyer just pointed out that answering questions is not a violation of the law.

You're being directed by your own attorney not to do that. But when you read the Statute, as your lawyer clearly stated, you can comment on any of the questions that are for informational purposes. That was what I brought up two weeks ago. This board needs to ...if you want people to participate; take a look at just what happened tonight. The Assistant Principal mentioned something and we had to stop in the middle because we had an issue about no one understood what some of those meant. There are some very bright people in the back of this room that when "what's plan b" there was an answer; there was give and take back and forth that technically under your own advice you weren't supposed to do but I'm so glad that you did. The more open; the easier you make these questions to be answered, the smarter the people that are going to be that walk into this room and the more of them. The smarter are people that come in here to offer ideas is going to make solving these issues that much easier. If you're worried about violating the Open Meeting Law Act; I'm told through one of the social media threads you have an attorney on retainer. He

should be sitting at this desk so that if there's a question that's asked, he can look up and say, "You don't want to answer that question". Protect yourselves; I understand that. Go to a City Council Meeting; that City Council has their attorneys sitting in the back. Mr. Traficante will...way back when had his attorneys there if there were any issues. Have someone there. Be open about it. Answer the simple questions. It's the policy that the chairperson is said not to answer questions. It's not the Law. Change the policy; answer the simple questions; get your lawyers here to keep you guys from going over the slippery slope; that's a simple solution that would serve everybody's purpose. It's not hard; open it up; fill the seats in this room with the brightest people in this City to help you solve your problems. Thank you.

Mrs. Arena had some prepared remarks that were left at the meeting which are on file in the Superintendent's Office attached to these minutes.

Announcement of Future Meetings

Our future meetings will be held on February 26th at 5:00 here at Western Hills Middle School and March 13th and 18th, 2013.

Adjourn Public Work Session

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Gale, seconded by Mrs. Ruggieri. All were in favor. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrea M. Iannazzi

School Committee Chairperson